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ABSTRACT

In the last 20 years, progress has been evident in the increase of enrollment in all stages of education in Asia. Tremendous efforts have been made to provide primary education for the remotest villages in the Asian communities. However, the concept that primary education is a means for fulfilling the obligations of human rights and for making rural children literate is not adequate. In the 1970s, a different approach must be implemented in rural education. New innovations in curriculum organization; provision of modern equipment and materials, better textbooks, and instructional teaching aids; more creative methods of teaching; preparation of better teachers; and more efficient school supervision and administration are envisaged to be given more consideration in primary education in rural communities. The following basic concepts should be treated as directives in creating a ruralized curriculum: (1) self-realization in the rural community, (2) economic awareness of the rural community, (3) social and cultural cognizance of the rural community life, and (4) civic responsibility toward the rural community. The rural communities will be the backbone of economic development in Asian countries for decades to come. Education can contribute to the needed rural reform and community development. (FF)

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Trends in the Ruralization of Primary School Curriculum in the Seventies and the Role of Teacher Education Institutions in Asian Countries

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TRENDS IN THE RURALIZATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM IN THE SEVENTIES AND THE ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

In the last two decades a remarkable achievement has been evident in the increase of enrolment in all stages of education in Asia. Tremendous efforts have been made to provide primary education for the remotest villages in the Asian communities. It is indeed the quantitative aspect of education which was dominant during the fifties and sixties. It is felt that a tangible shift in emphasis from the quantitative to the qualitative aspect of education should be maintained. New innovations in curriculum organization, provision of modern equipment and materials, better textbooks and instructional teaching aids, more creative methods of teaching, preparation of better teachers and more efficient school supervision and administration are envisaged to be given more consideration in primary education in rural communities.

I. The Strategies of Rural Education in the Seventies

The basic challenge in primary education is the improvement of the quality of the curriculum, techniques of instruction and type of teachers to be provided for the rural child. Till the present the rural child has been suffering from the education enforced upon him from the urban areas without due regard to his environmental conditions, his basic social and economic needs, his motivations and his interests. The urban concept imposes on the rural child the same knowledge, facts, norms and values which are suitable for the city child. As a result primary education in the rural areas has become stagnant and non-functional.

In the seventies it will be of utmost significance to approach education in the rural areas differently if we simply conceive of education as a dynamic tool for economic and social development. The concept of primary education as only a means for fulfilling the obligations of human rights and for making rural children literates is not adequate for the developing countries which are struggling for better per capita income and for increasing their Gross National Products. The quality of rural education should be tested primarily against the extent it contributes to the economy of the villages and their social betterment.

II. Rural Communities as the Backbone of the Asian Economy

The major issue in the Asian development strategy is that of agriculture, the basic source of livelihood of the population. In many Asian countries, agriculture is considered as the largest single source of wealth and it will remain for many years to come as the backbone of their economy. Between 80 per cent and 70 per cent of the population in Asia depend on the land for their livelihood: 80 percent in Indonesia, 74 per cent in Pakistan, 70 per cent in India, the Philippines and Malaysia. Rural communities not only provide the bulk of the nations' food but also the necessary raw materials for textile, jute, sugar and other industries. In many Asian countries, the agricultural communities contribute approximately 40 per cent to the Gross National Product.

If this is the case, what should be our strategy in education for the agricultural communities? Is it to overlook the basic fact that the rural sector is still and will be for decades to come the most essential source of wealth and livelihood for more than four-fifths of the population

in Asia? If education is mainly an economic and social investment, what then is the dynamic role which it should perform in the rural sector?

III. Rural Education and Economic Development

The Asian countries gave greater emphasis in the fifties and sixties to increasing their economy through introducing new methods and techniques for raising the output of agricultural production. Better systems in planting, in fertilizing, in combatting agricultural diseases, in harvesting, in irrigation, in animal husbandry and in introducing cooperative societies have been introduced. In many rural communities in Asia the farmers have met such endeavours with little enthusiasm. A great many of them resisted applying the new agricultural techniques on their farms.

It is definitely not a question of the farmer desiring to remain poor. The reason is much deeper than that. The question is mainly psychological as well as sociological. The farmer inherited from his ancestors certain conventional methods and ways of agriculture which have become an integral part of his way of life. He belives that what was good for his grandfather should be good for him at present. Gunnar Myrdal in his book *Asian Drama*[1] has rightly emphasized that imposing new techniques in agriculture on the Asian farmer would not be followed unless he is helped to change his attitudes, his concepts and his conventional way of life.

The cornerstone of any economic progress in rural communities has to come primarily through education. The central issue is the kind and type of education which should be provided to the rural child. At present the rural child is exposed to approximately the same curriculum and instructional materials as the urban child. Often such approach in providing the rural child with rigid urban education has not given him the motivation and interest to continue in school. As a result, the wastage in rural schools is much higher than in the urban ones. Out of one hundred rural children enrolled in Grade I in the Asian primary schools only forty reach Grade V. The wastage is as high as 60 per cent. This means that more than half of the budget allocated to primary education for rural areas is wasted.

In order to avoid such wastage, the writer is tackling two essential sectors of rural education. The first is the concepts and techniques of ruralizing the primary school curriculum so as to meet the pressing needs for functional and more dynamic education in rural communities. The second is the role of teacher education institutes in preparing competent teachers for our new approach towards the ruralization of the curriculum in primary education.

IV. Fundamentals of Ruralization of the Curriculum

Any given creative curriculum is a product of three major factors: (1) the concepts upon which the curriculum are based, (2) the abilities, skills and interests of pupils to be promoted and motivated, and (3) the economic, social and cultural conditions prevailing in the community which positively or negatively affect the realization of desired ends laid down in the objectives of education.

Bearing these three factors in mind, it becomes conspicuous that a creative curriculum is no more than an instrument through which specific aims of education could be realized. The aims of education for pupils in urban and rural areas are generally similar. In this respect no error should take place in our approach to curriculum ruralization. Our concern is not to lay down a set of objectives for education in rural areas which differs from the urban communities. The basic issue is that in developing countries in Asia where four-fifths of the population live in rural communities the curriculum makers should be aware of the fact that there are tremendous variations between the structures of the environmental conditions in urban and rural areas.

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[1] Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama; An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations,* III (New York: Pantheon, 1968).

The wide adoption of one curriculum regardless of the nature of the community in which it is carried out has done a great harm to the economic and social set-up in Asian countries. These countries suffer at present from the flow of youth from rural areas to capital cities and towns. Such marked migration of youth has a disastrous effect on the present and future progress of the developing countries. First, it deprived, as clearly noticed at present, the villages of their human resources and future leaders. This consequently affects the rural communities in their challenge for better life. Secondly, such migration constitutes a heavy burden on the economic and social advance of cities.

1. The Problem of Urbanization of Education in Rural Areas

Such manifestation, obviously noticed in the large percentage of migration of rural youth to towns, is due to many economic and social factors. Among these factors is that education provided to them in their villages has not given them the challenge to discover their potentialities and abilities in a rural set-up, the motivation to develop an understanding of their communities and to contribute to their improvement, the sense of civic and moral responsibilities toward their societies, and the basic manual skills in farming and animal raising.

The major problem revealed in many developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia is the trend toward the urbanization of education in rural communities. This trend was a resultant of three intricate factors. The first is that during the last two decades when developing countries attained their political independence a direction toward the provision of equal opportunity for access to higher education was emphasized. Consequently, the second factor was the provision of standardized education, mostly academic, both for primary and secondary schools. With this trend of standardization in education the third factor was the unification of objectives and curricular structures in all schools regardless of the environmental conditions in which they are located. These trends led the desire to overcome the fear of segregating education in rural areas from urban areas.

The result of such a fear was that a unified curriculum has been enforced in the schools. As the curriculum-makers are mostly posted in the capitals of states or countries the urban concept and content of the curriculum are evident. The same textbooks, instructional materials, visual teaching aids and teachers' guides used in urban communities are practised in rural areas. Even the preparation of teachers was urbanized. Consequently, the curriculum and its methods of instruction became divorced from village life. This trend has noticeably widened the gap between the rural children and the community in which they live.

2. Basic Concepts in the Ruralization of Curriculum

In order to build up a ruralized curriculum of a dynamic nature it is essential to lay down the following basic concepts to be treated as directives for its activities.

(a) *The first concept is rural self-realization.* A child in a rural community has a self which could not develop in a vacuum but rather in a concrete interaction with his environment. The constant growth of the self depends upon the scope of the intellectual, social and emotional activities in which it participates. Hence, the rural child could only achieve a desirable degree of self-realization if the school programme comprised a variety of activities leading to the development of his personality. Ability to express himself in reading and writing, skill in solving problems of counting and calculating, developing effective attitudes toward observing the natural changes in his environment, understanding basic facts concerning the social and economic conditions of his village, intelligent participation in community life are basic activities which make important contributions toward children's self-realization in their rural communities.

(b) *The second concept is the economic awareness of the rural environment.* Attention to this concept is really not a new phase of primary education in villages. It is the nature of the

village economic structure that a rural child from his early age plays a modest but significant role in assisting his family on the farm and in raising its cattle. After the school days and during terms of vacations the rural child is helping his parents in various responsibilities connected with planting the field, harvesting the crops, irrigation of the land and taking care of the family animals. In promoting the sense of economic awareness in the ruralized curriculum children should be provided with a variety of activities which enable them to develop an appreciation of earning one's living, an understanding of the existing and new methods of farming and raising animals, the knowledge of how farmers contribute to the economic progress of the country, and a comprehension of the purposes of the organizations serving the rural communities such as the agricultural cooperatives, the farmers' unions, the credit banks, etc.

It must be emphasized that the provision of knowledge related to the economic set-up of the village cannot alone serve the purpose of developing a genuine awareness in the rural child. It is of great significance for the school to provide him with the necessary skills in planting, irrigating and harvesting a piece of land and marketing its product. He should also be given the opportunity to develop skills in poultry raising. In other words, the rural child is able to develop an economic awareness of his rural community through basic knowledge as well as direct experience as a producer and consumer. Hence, the school encourages him to develop an appreciation of manual agricultural work and the desire to earn his living in a manner that adds to the total income of his family.

(c) *The third concept is social and cultural cognizance of the rural community life.* The psychological frustration observed nowadays among rural youth is mainly a resultant of the loss of social identity. In a world of rapid scientific and technological change together with the influence of mass media the youth of the sixties have demonstrated in many parts of the world their discontent toward the existing established social and cultural values in their societies. Especially in the case of rural youth and their unprecedented trek to urban areas the situation has become grievous as they left their villages never to return.

Hence, it is the sense of belonging which should be promoted in the rural child, the cognizance of social values and appreciation of cultural heritages prevailing in the rural communities. In the ruralization of primary school curriculum a serious attempt must be made in the direction of helping the child to develop an understanding of the customs, habits, norms and ways of life which exist in his community. Such an understanding will ultimately lead him to develop a genuine appreciation of his community, its cultural pattern, its traditional values, its folklore, its distinctive expressions in dancing, singing and music.

The ruralized curriculum emphasizes the provision of activities and facilities for the village child to promote his sense of belonging, of allegiance, and of attachment to the rural community. Consequently, the feeling of pride, of appreciation, of respect, and of being an integral part of the social and cultural heritage of his society will naturally flow from within the child.

(d) *The fourth concept is civic responsibility toward the rural community.* Being a member of a social group the rural child develops certain responsibilities toward himself, his family, his community and his country at large. In any given rural society the child is considered and treated as an active member. He takes an interest in the current affairs of his village which have a direct and indirect effect on the social or financial situation of his family. The presence of the tax-collector, the agricultural extension worker, the health officer, the political leader of the neighboring village and the like are events of great importance for adults as well as children.

As the rural child is not living in isolation from everyday-life events in the village, the ruralized curriculum has to provide the opportunities to educate him for citizenship responsibilities and for the acceptance of his civic duties as an active member in his society. Education

for civic responsibilities requires providing the rural child with know-how to participate intelligently and actively in the social activities which take place in his community. This would enable him to develop the sense of responsibility toward his social group, of cooperation with its members and of being an active element in improving his community's welfare. The ruralized curriculum, henceforth, is an instrument for providing a variety of on-the-spot civic experiences for the child to promote his sense of leadership. The Asian rural societies at present undergo great economic and social changes which call for more responsibilities on the part of our new generations. In order to meet such changes rural children should develop an active sense of leadership as well as constructive attitudes toward changing their conventional communities to more dynamic and active ones.

3. Definition of Targets for the Ruralized Curriculum

The four major concepts explained above are to be considered as the basis upon which certain targets could be formulated and specific activities provided in the ruralized curriculum. However, it becomes essential to observe three basic assumptions before laying down the targets of the curriculum for rural areas.

The first assumption is that the rural curriculum is a dynamic instrument for providing the child with basic knowledge and skills in learning.

The second assumption is that the rural curriculum is a tool for helping the child to intelligently adjust himself and to effectively contribute to the social, economic and cultural conditions of his rural community.

The third assumption is that the rural curriculum is a means for community development through preparing responsible and loyal citizens.

Taking into consideration the basic concepts and assumptions reviewed above it would be possible to formulate the following fundamental targets for the rural curriculum to achieve:

(a) to provide appropriate experiences necessary for the rural child to acquire adequate mastery of the basic tools of learning; in language, calculations, natural and social sciences;

(b) to promote in the rural child an integral personality by meeting his intellectual, emotional, social, aesthetic and physical needs;

(c) to inculcate in the rural child the scientific attitude toward his community and the motivation toward its betterment;

(d) to develop in the rural child a sense of belonging to his community, an awareness of civic responsibilities and a respect for its traditions and cultural values;

(e) to provide the rural child with the theoretical knowledge and practical experiences in agricultural activities, livestock and poultry raising, and local crafts; and

(f) to promote in the rural child an awareness of the new technology influencing his society and an appreciation of the new methods and modern techniques in farming and animal husbandry.

4. Planning and Implementing the Ruralized Curriculum

In some parts of Asia there have been and still are sincere endeavours for shaping rural education in such a way that it could contribute to the welfare of the villages. Some countries have even provided agricultural tools, livestock, poultry and pieces of land for cultivation to schools located in rural areas. Such efforts have met in many cases with failure and discouraging results

There are many causes for the ineffectiveness of such endeavours. However, the basic problem was the lack of gearing rural education to the national plan for economic and social development. Rural education was henceforth treated in isolation apart from national targets.

The major requirement for a functional rural education is a formulation of the role which it should play in the over-all plan of national development. Then comes the policy, the targets, the type of curriculum, the facilities and materials, the training of teaching and supervising personnel necessary for the implementation of the plan. It will be a grave error if rural education is caught again in a vicious circle in which it demonstrates no impact on the economic and social targets of the country.

In planning for the ruralization of the primary school curriculum it becomes necessary to consider certain factors of great significance. The first is the preparation of public opinion in the villages to accept and wholeheartedly cooperate in transforming their schools into centres for community development. This would require a change of concept and of attitude toward the function of the school from a mere conventional institution for teaching the basic academic skills and for issuing primary education leaving certificates to a dynamic centre for serving the rural people and their societies. The second factor is that of securing the support and services rendered by government agencies to villages. The agriculture extension agents, the social workers, the health officers, and the like, are to shoulder responsibilities for contributing to the activities of rural schools. The third factor is the plan for providing the teaching and supervisory personnel with the necessary training to contribute functionally to the ruralization of the curriculum. Appropriate methods of teaching and supervision are essential to adjust the curriculum to the environmental conditions and to stimulate the children to acquire the basic skills and abilities for improving their communities.

The fourth factor is the provision of books and instructional materials especially prepared for the rural child. Such reading materials which deal with the economic, social and cultural life of the rural communities motivate the child for a better understanding of his environment and give him the incentive for its improvement. The fifth factor is the financing, and the equipment and facilities necessary for providing practical experiences and skills for children in farming, livestock and poultry raising, and handicrafts. A piece of land for farming, premises for livestock and poultry raising, space for dairy products and food conservation, and tools for planting and handicrafts are amongst the necessary facilities and equipment for imparting a curriculum geared to functional rural education.

All these factors should be taken into consideration for effectively planning a rural curriculum which has a direct impact on the proper development of attitudes, knowledge and skills in the child. The end-product of the curriculum should be the betterment of the economic and social conditions of his rural community.

V. Task-Analysis and Status of the Rural Teacher

One of the major factors attributing to the ineffectiveness of primary education to demonstrate a noticeable social and economic improvement in the Asian rural communities is the lack of competent and efficient teachers who are appropriately prepared for taking up their challenging duties in villages. The problem lies in the academic, social and professional requirements which the teacher should satisfy during his preparation in a teacher education institute.

It is obvious that rural communities nowadays suffer from stagnation while urban societies are rapidly changing with the advance of science and technology. A conventional teacher who is poorly trained and ill-prepared is an additional human element contributing to such stagnation.

Our approach to teacher education in Asia is to be more dynamic as well as pragmatic. Before preparing teachers, the teacher institutes should identify the end-result of their training. In other words the whole process of the preparation should produce a teacher who fulfills the requirements necessary for rural development and progress.

To achieve this end-result teacher education institutes have first to analyze the task and duties of the teacher in rural areas. The nature of his job, the existing economic and social conditions of the community in which he is expected to serve, the type of cultural tradition of its inhabitants, the kind of difficulties hindering the constant progress of the community, the responsibilities which he should shoulder for surmounting such difficulties, the role of leadership which he should play, are all essential factors in the preparation of a good teacher.

In analyzing the task of the rural teacher it becomes necessary for teacher education institutes as well as the responsible bodies in the ministries of education to lay down basic principles and policy regarding his status and responsibilities in the community. This would include his (a) economic status, (b) academic status, (c) professional status, (d) poiltical status, and (e) national status.

The definition of job-analysis and formulation of clear workable policy for the status of teachers serving in rural areas should be commensurate with the needs of education as assessed in the light of national objectives. It should be recognized that the proper status of teachers and due public regard for the profession of teaching are of major importance for the full realization of these objectives. [2]

The economic status of rural teachers deserves some clarification. The general survey made by the Karachi Plan has shown that teachers in Asia draw salaries which varied from 40 to 50 US dollars per month. [3] In many rural Asian communities primary school teachers are poorly paid.

In the present approach of the Asian countries to give special emphasis upon the ruralization of the curriculum with a view to improve the economic and social life of agricultural communities a genuine attempt must be made to raise the financial status of the teacher. The voice of the rural teacher should be heard to influence legislation on salary increase and other financial benefits. The higher the salaries and allowances of primary school teachers, the greater will be the competency in performing their duties. The increase in salaries would give a desirable incentive to attract the right type of teachers to serve in rural communities.

VI. Basic Trends in the Preparation of Rural Teachers

A search for an appropriate teacher education programme for rural communities should be our major concern. In this endeavour it becomes necessary to clarify two major concepts in programme organization in teacher education.

First is the most prevalent concept in the Asian countries which is concerned primarily with content. In this concept a series of subject matters or courses of study are systematically organized and controlled in a typical traditional pattern. The academic and professional subjects are arranged in such a traditional way as a prerequisite for granting a diploma or a degree. In this approach the teacher education programme is "neatly cut up into separate pieces like a pie."[4] In this way the institute is divided into departments or sections, each responsible for teaching its own bit of the overall programme. Each member of the staff is giving instruction according to his clearcut assignment. In this concept of curriculum organization the emphasis is upon teach-

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[2] Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers, Paris, 21 September to 5 October 1966, *Records of the Conference* (Paris: Unesco, 1966), p. 2.

[3] Unesco, *The Needs of Asia in Primary Education* (Paris: Unesco, 1961), p. 19. (Education Studies and Documents No. 41).

[4] Combs W. Arthur, *The Professional Education of Teachers* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1965), p. 113.

Conventional Curriculum	
	STUDY OF ACADEMIC SUBJECTS Languages — Social Studies — Science — Mathematics — Health Education — Moral Instruction, etc.
	COURSES IN PROFESSIONAL SUBJECTS Philosophy of Education — History of Education — Principles of Education — Educational Psychology — Child Psychology, etc.
	STUDY OF PRACTICAL SUBJECTS Arts and Crafts — Home Sciences — Music — Dance — Physical Education — Gardening, etc.
	STUDENT TEACHING Methods of Teaching — On- and Off-Campus Practices

FIGURE A

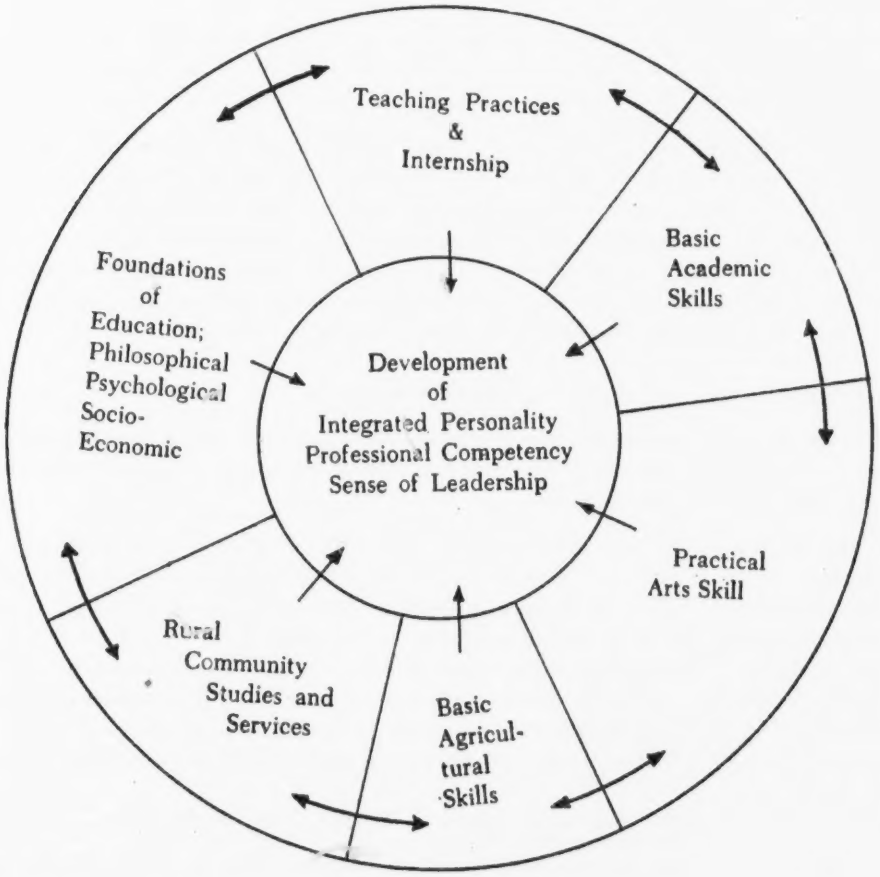
Teaching Practices & Internship
Basic Academic Skills
Practical Arts Skill
Basic Agricultural Skills
Rural Community Studies and Services
Foundations of Education; Philosophical Psychological Socio-Economic
Development of Integrated Personality Professional Competency Sense of Leadership

FIGURE B

ing the content of the programme and one hardly finds noticeable correlation or interrelation between the various courses imparted. (See Figure A.) This traditional organization in teacher education programmes is no longer adequate.

Secondly, we have the concept which shifts the emphasis in the teacher education programme from content to the learner.[5] This concept calls for directing the curriculum toward the pre-service teacher as a learner and prospective teacher. Academic knowledge, professional experiences and practical activities are not provided to the student teacher in segregated instruction to satisfy only the requirements of a teaching certificate or a degree. But rather all knowledge and experiences are organized in an integral and interrelated programme to provide the student teacher with the necessary *motivation* and *skills* to develop in him (a) an integrated personality, (b) professional competency, and (c) a sense of leadership (see figure B).

It is evident that rural schools suffer from ill-prepared teachers who are primarily bookish and whose main concern is to follow the syllabus prescribed without deviation. Again they reflect on the rural school the concept which emphasizes the content of the curriculum rather than the learner. In such a way instruction becomes static and uncreative.

It has to be very clear that in ruralizing the curriculum we require a different type of teacher, a teacher who is prepared in such a way as to be able to help the rural child to play an active role in his community socially, culturally and economically. This teacher should transform his school from a mere academic and traditional institution into a functional centre for community improvement. In this connection, N.P. Pillai emphasizes education as an investment for economic growth and social change and stresses that the role of the teacher is to help the children not only to be good citizens but also to become better productive individuals.[6]

VII. Principles of Curriculum Organization in Rural Teacher Education Institutes

The curriculum for preparing teachers for rural schools should naturally take into consideration (a) the psychological structure of the rural children and inhabitants, their motivations and interests, (b) the rural environmental conditions economically, socially and culturally, (c) the need for gearing the school instruction to the rural community life, and (d) the techniques the teacher should adopt for rendering tangible services for community reform.

On the basis of these four factors the curriculum for preparing rural teachers would generally comprise theoretical and practical courses dealing with (a) general education which mainly aims at providing broad understanding of the culture and community life, (b) academic education for the purpose of developing competencies and skills in subject areas, (c) professional education for providing theoretical knowledge and practical experiences necessary for promoting efficiency in teaching, (d) rural community education which provides basic understanding of the economic and social structures of the agricultural areas, and (e) rural community services which call for training student teachers in methods and techniques of serving the villages through intelligent participation in local development projects.

1. Maintaining Balance in Curriculum Organization

The Regional Meeting on Curriculum Development in Teacher Education in Asia held in 1969 at Quezon City, Philippines[7] has emphasized the significance of maintaining balance between the

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

[6] N. P. Pillai, "Developing Currirulum Plans for Teacher Education in Asia," *Trends in Teacher Education*, Number 11, July, 1970, p. 5.

[7] Regional Meeting of Teacher Educators in Asia, Quezon City, 23 September - 3 October 1969, *Curriculum Development in Teacher Education in Asia;* Report of the Meeting Convened by Unesco with the Cooperation of the Asian Institute for Teacher Educators (Bangkok: Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia, 1970), p. 7.

different components in the teacher education programme. In achieving such balance three major factors should be taken into consideration; (a) the level of academic education of student teachers, (b) the duration of the programme, and (c) the social background and the traditions of the country concerned. The Regional Meeting felt that the various courses should not be imparted in isolation from each other, but rather be viewed as integral parts of a total programme. At the same time these courses must be oriented to the development of an effective teaching prsonality.

In the preparation of a competent teacher for rural communities a well-balanced curriculum is to be carefully organized. Though general and academic courses are significant for increasing the competency of the student teacher in imparting instruction in his subject-areas, they should not take most of the time allocated to the programme. There is always the tendency of crowding the curriculum with academic courses without being aware of the importance of practical experiences which are extremely essential in the preparation of efficient teachers. However, due attention should be given to the professional and practical courses as well as activities related to rural community studies and services. To secure a balanced curriculum for preparing rural teachers it is recommended that the following percentages allotted to each component in the programme be considered:

General and Academic Education ..... approximately 30%

Professional and Practical Education ..... approximately 50% to 60%

Rural Community Studies and Services ..... approximately 20% to 30%

It is to be noted that the proportion allocated to each of the educational components mentioned above would vary from one teacher education institute to another in accordance with the length of the programme and the academic level of the student teachers. As observed an emphasis is being placed upon the professional, practical, and community studies and services in the curriculum in order to provide the teacher under training with the basic functional experiences which make him more competent not only in teaching but also in rural community development.

2. Professional Education and Student Teaching

It is expected that knowledge and experiences provided in the general and academic courses have a direct impact on increasing the professional competency of teachers under training. Isolating theory from practice leads to professional frustration. It should be borne in mind that theories provided both in general and academic studies should give direction and meaning to the development of the professional efficiency of the prospective teacher.

In order to help the prospective teacher to develop a rich insight and profound understanding of the nature and scope of, and the fundamental theories and practices in the teaching profession, it is necessary for the curriculum to include courses in (a) the philosophical foundations in education for the purpose of exploring the various philosophical theories and concepts as affecting educational practices and policy-making, (b) the psychological foundations of education with the view to develop an understanding of basic psychological principles in the educational processes and an ability to use these principles in teaching and learning situations, and (c) the social foundations of education which mainly aim at exploring the impact of social and economic factors on education and vice versa.[8]

It is to be borne in mind that the knowledge and experiences presented to the student teachers in these foundations should have a direct and indirect bearing on the development of their professional personalities. Developing concepts, attitudes, interests and aptitudes are of

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 39-47.

great importance. In the meantime, providing these philosophical, psychological and social foundations should to a great extent have implications for rural life. The philosophy of education for rural areas, the psychological behaviour of rural children and adults, the social and economic factors in rural communities should receive due emphasis from the instructors.

Student teaching is generally considered as the cornerstone of any teacher education programme. The importance of student teaching lies in the fact that the prospective teacher is testing in action all experiences and knowledge which he accomplished during his preparation. His personality, his skills, his abilities and his academic and professional experiences are examined in real classroom situations.

Four major stages of student teaching are suggested. *Firstly,* general observation of children behaviour, teachers at work, instructional materials and books used, co-curricular activities, school system and administration, etc. Such observation is to be considered as an introductory phase of teaching practice. *Secondly,* a period of intensive orientation in selected schools with the contents of curriculum, planning of lessons, techniques of teaching, methods of class managements, various textbooks and teaching aids, examination procedures and school-community activities and the like. *Thirdly,* a period of gradual introduction to practice teaching in classes. Student teachers in this period become responsible for teaching in classes and share in the various programme activities of the laboratory school as on-campus training. *Fourthly,* the distribution of student teachers to the co-operating schools situated off-campus in order to assume their full duties in teaching and participation in school activities for a longer period.

Two main factors must be emphasized in student-teaching. One is that during all the four stages of student teaching discussion, conferences and tutorial guidance are essential. Student teachers with the advice of their instructors should exchange experiences, share ideas, assess and evaluate their observations and teachings. The other factor is that emphasis should be placed upon assisting the student teachers to gear their instruction to rural community and participate functionally in the school-community social programmes.

3. Practical Arts

In preparing a well integrated personality in our prospective teachers it is necessary to promote in them their artistic abilities and appreciation of aesthetic values. Free self-expression through drawing, painting and sculpture is to be encouraged and guided. Abilities in crafts could be developed through weaving, woodwork, metalwork, leatherwork and pottery. At the same time, skills should be provided for the use of local materials available in rural areas to produce artistic and useful objects.

The distinctive types of music, dancing and folklore of the rural communities are fading away nowadays. Such artistic expressions have been developed through centuries in rural societies. The rural teacher education institutions should shoulder the responsibility for preserving and reviving the cultural values inherited from the past in rural communities. Prospective teachers should be provided with the knowledge and experience of the rural folklore and its aesthetic expressions in music, dancing and singing.

In the meantime, emphasis is to be placed upon developing abilities and skills especially among women student teachers in home economics and home crafts. It is very essential to provide the rural areas with competent teachers who are capable of providing experiences and skills for school girls and adult women in the community in cookery, needle-work and home craft.

4. Agricultural Education

There are many teacher educators who believe that the rural school should be closely identified with community development. In Asian countries rural community development is basically

connected with the improvement of the farmer's livelihood. If the rural school is to play a functional role in improving the economic condition of the village in which it is situated, then it becomes essential that teachers should acquire the necessary experience in farming, animal and poultry raising.

Thus, the responsibility of teacher education institutes is to be defined in this regard. The curriculum is to emphasize the provision of theoretical and practical knowledge and experiences in agriculture for the rural prospective teachers. Developing skills and abilities in methods of farming, raising animals and poultry and processing dairy products become necessary as an integral part of the curriculum.

As the advance of technology has tremendously affected the techniques of increasing plant production, it becomes inevitable for the rural prospective teacher to acquire the knowledge and practice of such techniques to be applied in villages. This would require the teacher education institute to give due consideration in its programme to providing the student teacher with the appropriate understanding of the agricultural situation of the country and with the practical skills in improving its economy. Through such training, it is expected that the rural teacher will functionally be able to provide useful agricultural experiences to children and to help increase the farmers' livelihood in villages.

5. Community Studies and Services

Our main concern in producing a competent rural teacher is how to develop in him the awareness toward the major economic, social and health difficulties confronting the villages, and at the same time promote in him the sense of responsibility to play an active role in rural reform. The need for such a teacher is urgent in the Asian countries especially in their struggle to improve the conditions of their rural communities.

In the seventies the rural teacher education institutes should prepare the competent teacher who acquires a sense of leadership and devotion to the cause of rural reform. He should be trained to challenge the existing situation and shoulder responsibilities in combatting illiteracy, poverty and disease prevailing in the rural communities. Our teacher should not be trained only for imparting the curriculum in his school, but also to be prepared as an agent for reforming the rural society in which he is posted.

If this assumption is accepted it becomes inevitable to lay a special emphasis in the curriculum of the teacher education institutes upon providing the student teachers with the necessary knowledge, experience and techniques of studying the rural community and of participating in its economic and social reform.

In this unit of community studies and services it is expected that the syllabus would comprise selected activities in these areas: (a) development of an understanding of the various conditions of rural communities, economically, socially and culturally, (b) identifying major problems hindering the progress of these communities, (c) studying these problems in depth and finding out their causes and implications for the improvement of those communities, (d) exploring appropriate methods for solving pragmatically these problems, and (e) participating in existing reform projects in some villages in order to acquire skills and abilities in serving the rural communities.

6. Research and New Methods and Techniques in Teacher Education

The Asian societies are in the process of continuous change, economically, socially and culturally. The speed of change as a resultant of the innovations in science and technology together with the use of mass media devices has been tremendous in the last few decades. The change will continue and become a constant feature in life betterment. Rural teacher education institutions

will become stagnant and inactive if they are not aware of the new scientific trends. Such institutions should be dynamic centres in preparing teachers for a changing rural societies.

This requires an understanding of the strategy of education in coping with the scientific and technological change in everyday life. Science and technology have introduced new approaches in the techniques of farming and increasing production. They have also introduced new methods and techniques in teaching and learning. All such innovations are to be taken into consideration in organizing the curriculum and imparting it in the teacher education programmes.

The Regional Meeting on Curriculum Development in Teacher Education in Asia has rightly stated three essential factors.[9] The first is that the traditional methods in curriculum organization and teaching cannot provide solutions to the vast problems of teacher preparation. The second factor is the pressing need for actively encouraging and facilitating a spirit of experimentation and research in trying out and evolving new techniques and better methods in teacher education in the Asian region. The third factor is that teacher education should spear-head innovation and dynamic growth of education.

In order for rural teacher education to meet the increasing need for development, considerable attention should be accorded to the establishment of a research unit or section in each institution for examining the new techniques and evolving others which could be applicable in improving the existing system of teacher preparation. Such methods and techniques in teaching, in community studies and services are to be directed primarily towards promoting an attitude for enquiry, for self study, for exploring ways and means to serve more functionally children and adults in rural communities.

VIII. Rural Education Looks Ahead

The approach in this study has tended to lay down the foundations upon which the ruralization of the primary school curriculum could be functionally achieved with due awareness of the economic, social and cultural conditions of the agricultural communities in Asia. In the meantime an attempt was made to throw light on the basic principles and concepts upon which competent teachers could be prepared to impart the ruralized curriculum with a high degree of efficiency. These two factors, the curriculum and the teacher, should be recognized as the cornerstone of any endeavour to improve the educational set-up in the Asian rural communities.

In the seventies, it is expected that rural education will receive special attention from the responsible authorities in the Ministries of Education and in the teacher education institutes. It has to be a combined effort of all those concerned with the improvement of the rural communities. A series of workshops, conferences and meetings in each Asian country should be set up for the purpose of planning and implementing a long-range programme for ruralizing the primary school curriculum and preparing teachers for its realization. This would require a great deal of studies and research to find out the most appropriate methods and techniques for making rural education an integral part of the nation's policy for raising the standard of life in the rural sector.

For decades to come the rural communities will be the backbone of the economic development in the Asian countries. Educators, economists, agriculturists and social workers should make collective efforts in order to find out the most applicable and appropriate means through which education could contribute to the rural reform. In the meantime, any educational reform could hardly be achieved without the full enthusiasm and cooperation of the teacher education institutes which are responsible for producing competent teachers. These institutes in every Asian nation should play an active role in preparing efficient teachers who are capable of contributing to the constant development of the rural communities.

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[9] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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